



*Office of the United States Attorney  
District of Arizona*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **PAIR CONVICTED FOR ACTIONS IN SABINO CANYON**

TUCSON, Ariz. - Rodney A. Coronado, 39, of Tucson, Ariz. and Matthew A. Crozier, 33, of Prescott, Ariz. were found guilty here this afternoon of Conspiracy to Impede or Injure an Officer of the United States, Interfering with a Forest Officer and Depredation of Government Property by a federal jury. The case was tried before U.S. District Court Judge David C. Bury beginning on December 6, 2005 and ending on December 13, 2005 with a guilty verdict on all counts. Sentencing is set before Judge David Bury on March 8, 2006.

U.S. Attorney Paul K. Charlton said of today's verdict, "This is another case of individuals who believed they were above the law. Instead of seeking to change the law, they believed they could violate it with impunity."

Sue Kozeczek, Deputy Forest Supervisor, Coronado National Forest stated that "We are pleased with the verdict and would like to thank the U.S. Attorney's Office, the Arizona Game and Fish Department and the FBI. Their support, cooperation, hard work and ongoing investigation have aided in this prosecution. I also want to thank our Forest Service Law Enforcement Officers and Coronado employees for their professionalism and dedication to their job of caring for the land and serving the people."

The evidence at trial showed that in the early morning hours on March 24, 2004, Rodney Coronado, Matthew Crozier and other Earth First! members entered the Sabino Canyon Recreation Area within the Coronado National Forest which had been closed to the public, with the intent to interfere with efforts to trap and relocate mountain lions who had become habituated to humans and therefore posed a safety risk to individuals in the Sabino Canyon area. The evidence showed that on March 24, 2004 law enforcement officials spotted three people in the canyon, which was a violation of the closure order which had been signed on March 9, 2004. Officers pursued the three individuals and witnessed them digging up a lion snare and sensor which had been set in order to trap the lions. A portion of the sensor was never located and the snare was destroyed.

A conviction for Conspiracy to Impede or Injure an Officer of the United States carries a maximum penalty of six years in prison, a \$ 250,000 fine or both. A conviction for Interfering with a Forest Officer carries a maximum penalty of six months in prison, a \$ 5,000 fine or both. A conviction for Depredation of Government Property carries a maximum penalty of one year in prison, a \$250,000 fine or both. In determining an actual sentence, Judge Bury will consult the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

The investigation leading to the guilty verdict was conducted by the FBI, the U.S. Forest Service and Arizona Game and Fish Department. The prosecution was handled by Wallace H. Kleindienst and Beverly K. Anderson, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz.

CASE NUMBER: CR-04-2404-TUC-DCB(GEE)  
RELEASE NUMBER: 2005-216(Coronado, et.al)

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